



**United States Department of the Interior  
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
FIRE MANAGEMENT BRANCH  
National Interagency Fire Center  
3833 South Development Avenue  
Boise, Idaho 83705**

In Reply Refer To:  
FWS/RF

Memorandum: March 26, 2004

To: Regional Fire Management Coordinators, Regions 1-7

From: Chief, Fire Management Branch /s/ Phil Street

Subject: All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV ) Torch Units

This memorandum provides interim direction on the use of existing All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) torch equipment and for the procurement of new equipment. An Interagency Team of subject matter experts from the Department of the Interior and USDA Forest Service Missoula Technology and Development Center are evaluating existing equipment in order to establish industry standards. The project is expected to be completed by January, 2005.

Recent events within prescribed fire operations have exposed deficiencies in terms of the manufacturing and use of ATV torches. As a result, our interagency partners have either modified or prohibited use of the equipment.

At this time, the FWS does not feel that a moratorium on existing equipment is warranted, and will continue its use for Service prescribed fire operations. However, prior to beginning operations with the equipment, users will be required to complete the checklists attached to this memo.

As mentioned, the DOI and the USFS are presently working to define standards for ATV torch units. When this project is complete, the FWS intends to adopt the new standards as policy. At that time a decision will be made on whether or not retrofits for old equipment will be necessary.

Questions concerning these requirements should be directed to Rod Bloms, the FWS Fire Management Operations and Safety Specialist, at (208) 387-5599.

Attachment 1 – Interim ATV Torch Program Checklist

Attachment 2 – Interim ATV Torch Requirements, Procedures, and Checklists

CC: Chief, Division of Natural Resources  
Chief, Safety & Health Office  
Regional Safety Managers, Regions 1-7